

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Claims 23-24 were previously cancelled. Claim 19 has been amended herein. All of the pending claims 1 through 24 are presented below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Please enter these claims as amended.

**Listing of the Claims:**

1. (previously presented) A method for obtaining information about the capacity or tendency of an oligopeptide of at most 9 amino acids long to regulate expression of a gene comprising the steps of:

a) contacting said oligopeptide with at least one cell; and  
b) determining the presence of a NF-kappaB/Rel protein in or derived from said at least one cell.

2. (original) The method according to claim 1 wherein said oligopeptide comprises an amino acid sequence corresponding to a fragment of a naturally occurring polypeptide.

3. (original) The method according to claim 2 wherein said naturally occurring polypeptide comprises human chorionic gonadotropic hormone (hCG).

4. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein said cell comprises an eukaryotic cell.

5. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 further comprising  
c) determining the presence of said NF-kappaB/Rel protein in or derived from a cell which has not been contacted with said oligopeptide and determining the ratio of said NF-kappaB/Rel protein found in step b) to gene product found in step c).

6. (Withdrawn) A method for identifying or obtaining a signalling molecule comprising a peptide or functional derivative or analogue thereof capable of modulating expression of a gene in a cell comprising providing said cell with a peptide or derivative or analogue thereof and determining the activity and/or nuclear translocation of a gene transcription factor and then synthesising the molecule with the desired activity.

7. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6 further comprising determining whether said signalling molecule is membrane-permeable.

8. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6 wherein said gene transcription factor comprises a NF-kappaB/Rel protein.

9. (Withdrawn) A method for identifying or obtaining a signalling molecule comprising a peptide or functional derivative or analogue thereof capable of modulating expression of a gene in a cell comprising providing said cell with a peptide or derivative or analogue thereof and determining relative up-regulation and/or down-regulation of at least one gene expressed in said cell and then synthesising the molecule with the desired activity.

10. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 9 further comprising determining relative up-regulation and/or down-regulation of at least one gene expressed in said cell.

11. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6 further comprising determining relative up-regulation and/or down-regulation of a multitude of genes expressed in said cell.

12. (Withdrawn) A method for identifying or obtaining a signalling molecule comprising a peptide or functional derivative or analogue thereof capable of modulating expression of a gene in a cell comprising providing a peptide or derivative or analogue thereof and determining binding of said peptide or derivative or analogue thereof to a factor related to gene control and then synthesising the molecule with the desired activity.

13 (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 12 further comprising providing a multitude of peptides or derivatives or analogues thereof and determining binding of at least one of said peptides or derivatives or analogues thereof to a factor related to gene control.

14. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 12 wherein said factor related to gene control comprises a transcription factor.

15. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 14 wherein said transcription factor comprises a NF-kappaB-Rel protein.

16. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 12 further comprising providing a cell with said peptide or derivative or analogue thereof and determining the activity and/or nuclear translocation of a gene transcription factor in said cell.

17. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 12 further comprising providing a cell with said peptide or derivative or analogue thereof and determining relative up-regulation and/or down-regulation of at least one gene expressed in said cell.

18. (Withdrawn) A signalling molecule useful in modulating expression of a gene in a cell and identifiable or obtainable by employing a method according to claim 1.

19. (Withdrawn - currently amended) A signalling molecule according to claim 18 selected from the group of peptides LQG, AQG, LQGV (SEQ ID NO:1), AQGV (SEQ ID NO:2), LQGA (SEQ ID NO:19), VLPALP (SEQ ID NO:13), ALPALP (SEQ ID NO:21), VAPALP (SEQ ID NO:22), ALPALPQ (SEQ ID NO:23), VLPAAPQ (SEQ ID NO:24), VLPALAQ (SEQ ID NO:25), LAGV (SEQ ID NO:26), VLAALP (SEQ ID NO:27), ~~VLAALP~~, VLPALA (SEQ ID NO:28), VLPALPQ (SEQ ID NO:29), VLAALPQ (SEQ ID NO:30), VLPALPA (SEQ ID NO:31), GVLPALP (SEQ ID NO:32), LQGVLPALPQVVC (SEQ ID

NO:34), LPGCPRGVNPVVS (SEQ ID NO:40), LPGC (SEQ ID NO:41), MTRV (SEQ ID NO:42), MTR, VVC, and functional analogues or derivatives thereof.

20. (Withdrawn) A signalling molecule capable of modulating expression of a gene in a cell comprising a peptide of at most 30 amino acids or a functional analogue or derivative thereof.

21. (Withdrawn) A signalling molecule according to claim 20 wherein said peptide is an oligopeptide of from about 3 to at about 15 amino acids long.

22. (Withdrawn) A modulator of NF-kappaB/Rel protein activation comprising a signalling molecule according to claim 18.

23-24. (Cancelled).